

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 19, as follows:

According to a particularly preferred aspect of the present invention, the mixture obtained at the end of step (a) can also comprise, in suspension, a quantity of inert solid I in granular form, which can have various functions such as, for example, improving the mechanical properties of the catalyst granule, supporting the catalytic solid in order to increase the catalytic surface effectively available, or it can act as a thickening agent in the subsequent step (b) for the preparation of the catalytic solid. Inert solids suitable for the purpose are certain polymers in granule or powder form such as polystyrene or polyester, possibly modified according to the known art. Inorganic solids such as natural or synthetic silica are preferably used, in its various varieties, also commercially available, titania, silico-aluminates, calcium carbonate, magnesium chloride (in a substantially insoluble form), or a combination thereof. Said inert solids I are preferably in granular form with average granule size sizes ranging from 10 μm to 300 μm , and a narrow size distribution. A silica typically suitable for the purpose is a microspheroidal silica (size 20-100 μm) having a BET surface area ranging from 150 to 400 m^2/g , a total porosity equal or higher than 80% and an average pore radius of 50 to 200 Å.

Please amend the Abstract as shown on the following page: